

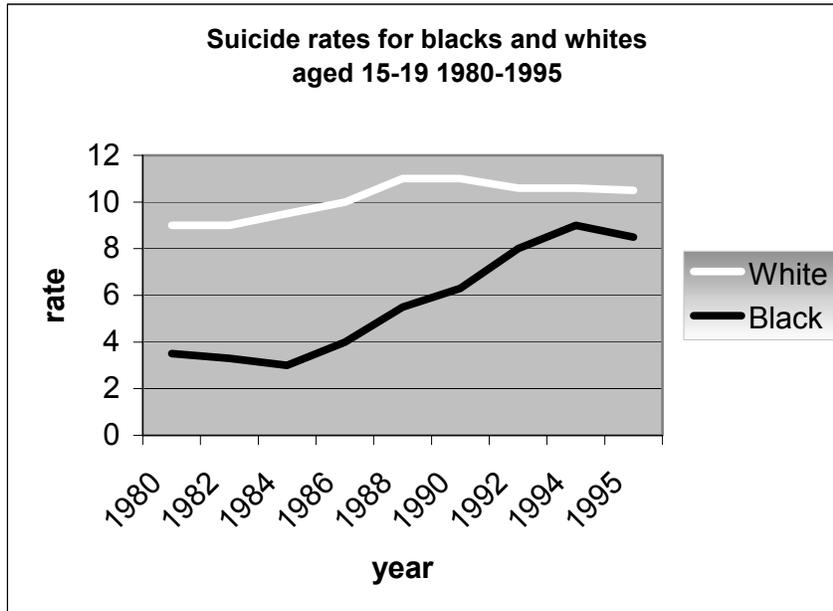
# SUICIDE

LET'S TALK ABOUT...

...the Impact on African Americans

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among black youth, after homicides and accidents.

While Caucasians are twice as likely as African Americans to complete suicide, the rate of suicide is growing faster among African American youth than among Caucasian youth.



## Myths:

- Only middle class Caucasians complete suicide.
- Depression is a personal weakness rather than a medical condition.
- There is no cultural difference in the expression of suicidal behaviors.
- African Americans are too psychologically unsophisticated to experience depression and suicide.

## Things We Can Do to Help:

- Remove barriers to treatment.
- Develop liaisons with faith community.
- Better access to mental health treatment.
- Remove stigma associated with mental health treatment.
- Recognize warning signs and help a friend or family member get professional help.
- Help remove the stigma that suicide contradicts gender and cultural role expectations:
  - Religious stigma of suicide as the unforgivable sin.
  - African American men are macho and do not take their own lives.
  - African American women are always strong and resilient and never crack under pressure.
- Increase awareness in cultural differences in the expression of suicidal behaviors:
  - African Americans are less likely to use drugs during a suicide crisis.
  - Behavioral component of depression in African Americans is more pronounced.
  - Some African Americans express little suicide intent or depressive symptoms during suicide crisis.
  - Differences in classification by medical examiners.